



Victoria Lane Academy Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum Overview.

Children in the nursery and reception classes follow the Foundation Stage Curriculum and work towards achieving the Early Learning Goals. The national expectation is that most children will reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of their Reception year. The aim is to ensure that children are confident, have a positive attitude to learning and can work co-operatively with other children and adults. There are three prime areas of learning and four specific areas of learning in which prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The Prime areas of Learning			
Communication and Language	Physical Development	Personal, Social and Emotional Development	
The Specific areas of Learning			
Literacy	Mathematics	Understanding the World	Expressive Arts and Design

Play underpins the delivery of all the EYFS. Young children learn most effectively through structured play. Our Foundation Stage staff work together as a team and plan for children's learning in seven areas of development to ensure that all these areas are covered within an interesting, stimulating and supportive framework. They also ensure that children progressively develop their skills and knowledge throughout this phase of their school life. The children are taught directly and also have a choice of planned activities so that they are able to develop independent learning habits. We actively encourage them to initiate their own activities. Wherever possible, learning is accompanied by trips or on site visits to provide meaningful, memorable learning experiences for our youngest children.

Prime Areas of Learning

The prime areas of learning are given a high priority throughout your child's time in Nursery and Reception. We recognize that if a child's skills are not nurtured and developed in the prime areas they find it difficult to access the more specific areas of learning encountered throughout their school life. Prime areas are taught through carpet time sessions and play activities. Play activities specifically designed to develop your child's fine motor, gross motor and communication and language skills are planned carefully into each school day.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

The wellbeing of our children is our utmost priority and all children in EYFS and throughout the school receive regular PSED lessons. We use the SCARF program to ensure and support a comprehensive coverage of PSED topics that are adapted to the needs of our children. For more information on EYFS curriculum coverage see the PHSCE section of our website.



Wellbeing - To help our young children better understand and manage their emotions we use the story 'The Colour Monster' by Anna Llenas. In conjunction with 'Zones of Regulation' theory, this story helps children understand that it is OK to feel different emotions. It explains what is happening when they feel different emotions, leaving them better equipped to manage the range of feelings all children experience.



Communication and Language - Communication and language skills comprise Speaking, Listening and Attention and all are vital for a child's success in school and beyond. Communication and Language is a priority at VLA and every day is filled with opportunities for children to practice and improve their skills. Daily story sessions and regular class discussions give children the chance to develop their listening, talk about what they hear and enhance their vocabulary. Throughout our provision, there are a wealth of opportunities for children to develop their language skills through play. Small world, role-play, investigation, problem solving challenges and construction areas are all planned with communication and language at the forefront so that children cultivate their abilities during their play.



Physical Development - There are 2 facets to our physical development program, gross motor and fine motor skills.

Gross Motor - Gross motor skills include jumping, running, balancing, core strength and climbing and are vital for young children to maintain their physical fitness but also to prepare them for school life and beyond. Without well-developed gross motor skills, children find it difficult to sit for extended periods, hold a pencil for writing and maintain concentration during lesson time. To help children develop their gross motor skills we have a range of fun resources both inside and outside including climbing frames, tunnels, big paint brushes, sit on scooters, balance bikes, obstacle courses and balance beams. The children also take part in regular PE and movement sessions that help children to work on their core strength, balance and other skills in a more structured way.



Fine Motor - Children's fine motor skills determine how well they are able to hold a pencil, write their letters, use a knife and fork and many other day to day activities. We provide daily fun opportunities throughout EYFS to help children strengthen their skills. These include playing with playdough, cutting with scissors, threading, weaving, digging, playing with jigsaws, painting and a whole host of other activities.

Literacy - Developing a life-long love of reading is a priority at Victoria Lane Academy. Books, stories and rhymes are at the centre of our EYFS curriculum. Topics are introduced through high quality, varied and colourful books and children have daily story sessions and phonics lessons as well as regular opportunities to practice their skills during play time. We teach children to read using the systematic, synthetic phonics program - Letters and Sounds.



In Nursery, we use Little Wandle Foundation for phonics which uses fun and engaging games to support children to learn to listen to and differentiate different sounds, recognize rhyme and begin to identify the sounds in words. This is the precursor to our Reception phonics program - Little Wandle for Letters and Sounds Revised. Children are also taught how to hold a pencil and given the opportunity to experiment with writing.

When they start in Reception, children use the foundation they have been given in Nursery to help them to learn to read. In Reception children are taught all the letters of the alphabet as well as combinations of letters that make a particular sound e.g. ch as in chicken or ai as in snail. We use Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised a comprehensive systematic synthetic phonics program that uses engaging resources and high-quality reading books to ensure all children are effectively supported to learn to read.



Mathematics - At VLA, we believe that the development of a firm foundation in the understanding of number in the Early Years allows your child to enjoy and succeed in their maths learning as they progress through the school.



In Nursery children are introduced to the concept of number through counting songs, rhymes and stories. We use a wide range of resources to help enrich young children's natural interest in mathematics and introduce them to concepts such as subitising (recognising a quantity without counting) and tens frames. Play opportunities are provided for child-initiated exploration of number as well as shape, space and measure.

In Reception, we continue to use a wide range of resources to support children's understanding of number. There is a large focus on developing a deep understanding of numbers to 10, using resources such as tens frames, counting cubes and part whole models.

We use CBeebies Characters - the Numberblocks to develop children's understanding of number. Through these characters, children are introduced to important mathematical concepts such as number composition, subitising (recognizing a quantity without the need for counting), place value, odds and evens and doubling and halving.

We aim to develop children's confidence in maths through providing lots of opportunities in taught sessions and during play for children to explore number. Children are encouraged to use their knowledge of number to solve mathematical problems as well as to invent problems of their own to solve.



Understanding the World - At VLA, we believe that learning about the world begins at an early age. In the EYFS, we aim to foster and inspire the natural enthusiasm of young children for learning about the world around them in order to lay the foundations for a life-long interest in science, geography, history and RE. Throughout their time in EYFS, pupils are exposed to a range of meaningful, memorable experiences that allow them to explore and begin to ask questions about their world. These include visits from members of the community, outside visits to farms, gardens and museums, practical science experiments and structured play opportunities. Each topic is introduced with a colourful story or non-fiction book to help bring it to life.



Expressive Arts and Design - Throughout Nursery and Reception, children are given opportunities to express themselves through music, dance, creating, drawing, painting, role-play, junk modelling and construction. Many of these activities are child-led and children are encouraged to select their own resources and let their imaginations run wild. More structured activities are also planned into the curriculum to introduce children to new ways of expressing themselves as well as to help them develop skills such as cutting, sticking, drawing, painting and building.



